

11-12-2007

## External Peer Review

The College at Brockport, College Senate

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# SUNY BROCKPORT

College Senate  
State University of New York College at Brockport  
350 New Campus Drive  
Brockport, NY 14420-2925  
(585) 395-2586 (Fax) 395-2246

Resolution # 04

2007-2008

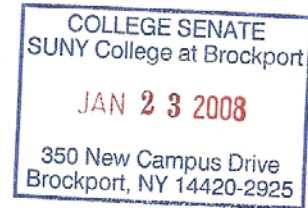
## COLLEGE SENATE

New Resolution: ☒  
Supersedes Res #: \_\_\_\_\_

TO: Dr. John R. Halstead, College President

FROM: The College Senate: *November 12, 2007*

RE: → I. Formal Resolution (*Act of Determination*)  
II. Recommendation (*Urging the Fitness of*)  
III. Other, For Your Information (*Notice, Request, Report, etc.*)



SUBJ: **External Peer Review** routing #48 05-06 FP

Signed:   
(P. Gibson Ralph, 2007-2008 College Senate President)

Date: *12/3/07*

Please fill out the bottom portion and follow the distribution instructions at the end of this page.

TO: P. Gibson Ralph, The College Senate President

FROM: John R. Halstead, College President

RE: → I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution (circle choice)

a. Accepted

Implementation Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II, III. Response to Recommendation or Other/FYI

a. Received and acknowledged \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

b. Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:   
(Dr. John R. Halstead, President, SUNY College at Brockport)

Date: *1/11/08*

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DEAN(S) COPY: Department Chair(s), Other: \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGE SENATE COPIES: Originator, College Senate Website, Other: *1/25/08 ayk*

**COLLEGE SENATE OFFICE  
RESOLUTION PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

Routing  
Number

#48 05-06 FP

ROUTING NUMBER TO BE ASSIGNED BY SENATE OFFICE

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: FEBRUARY 23**

Proposals received after the deadline may not be reviewed until next semester.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Submit proposals individually rather than packets with multiple documents.
- Complete this cover page for each proposal (available online at [www.brockport.edu/collegesenate](http://www.brockport.edu/collegesenate))
- Prepare proposal in Word format using committee guidelines (available online)
- Submit proposal electronically with this cover page to [senate@brockport.edu](mailto:senate@brockport.edu), [facprez@brockport.edu](mailto:facprez@brockport.edu)
- All updates must be resubmitted to the Senate office with an updated cover page, use routing number
- Questions? Call the Senate office at 395-2586 or the appropriate committee chairperson.

**1. PROPOSAL TITLE:**

Please be somewhat descriptive, for example, *Graduate Probation/Dismissal Proposal* rather than *Graduate Proposal*.

**External Peer Review Policy**

**2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

proposal to utilize external peer review in promotion and tenure decisions

**3. SUBMISSION & REVISION DATES:** PLEASE DATE ALL UPDATED DOCUMENTS

First Submission	Updated on	Updated on	Updated on
March 29, 2006	April 26, 2006	5/8/06 – revision made at Senate meeting	10/22/07

**4. SUBMITTED BY: (contact person)**

Name	Department	Phone	Email
Tim Flanagan	Provost	2524	tflanaga@brockport.edu

**5. COMMITTEES TO COPY: (Senate office use only)**

Standing Committee	Forwarded To	Date
__ Enrollment Planning & Policies	Committee Chair	3/29/06, 5/22/06, 10/30/06*
<b>xxFaculty &amp; Professional Staff Policies</b>	Executive Committee	4/10/06, 9/23/06, 10/22/07
__ General Education & Curriculum Policies	Senate Floor	4/17/06, 10/9/06, 10/29/07
__ Graduate Curriculum & Policies	College President	5/22/06 Returned to
__ Student Policies	Other	Committee 11/20/07
__ Undergraduate Curriculum & Policies		

\*(ROUTING NUMBER WILL BE A CHRONOLOGICAL NUMBER SEQUENCE FOLLOWED BY COMMITTEE INITIALS)

**Proposal returned to committee on 5/22/06 by President Halstead.**

**Proposal and proposed amendment #48 05-06 FP returned to committee on 10/30/06 by Senate.**

**Proposal and Resolution returned to Executive Committee 10/22/07, Senate for review on 10/29/07 & vote on 11/12/07, President Halstead for approval 11/20/07.**

**RESOLUTION REGARDING UNIVERSAL EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW**  
**(in response to #48 05-06 FP)**

*WHEREAS the College Senate has confidence in the quality of the teaching faculty at the State University of New York College and Brockport, and*

*WHEREAS the diverse disciplines at SUNY Brockport do not yield to a clear and equitable one-size-fits-all implementation for external peer review, and*

*WHEREAS the work considered in departmental advancement, promotion and tenure (APT) processes must include work that has been peer-reviewed prior to publication, and*

*WHEREAS several departments have already considered external peer review for their APT processes, and*

*WHEREAS the discussion of the proposed policy to require external peer review in all promotion and tenure positions has not yielded any compelling reason for universal implementation, and*

*WHEREAS departments are best equipped to make decisions as to their unique information needs in APT decisions,*

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the College Senate does not recommend universal external peer review at this time and rejects #48 05-06, and be it further

**RESOLVED** that departments continue to consider external peer review among the tools to effectively evaluate candidates for advancement, promotion and tenure.

Approved by Executive Committee 10/22/07

**Summary comments of Faculty and Professional Staff Policies Committee to  
#48-05-06, External Peer Review Policy**

Subject:

Academic policy proposal for Senate consideration

From:

Tim Flanagan <flanagan@brockport.edu>

Date:

Mon, 06 Mar 2006 16:41:00 -0500

To:

mnoll@brockport.edu

CC:

mass mailing list of deans and directors <deans@list.brockport.edu>

Dear Mark,

Attached please find a Word file of a one-page proposal to utilize external peer review in promotion and tenure decisions. This proposal has been circulated, discussed and revised twice last semester in Provost Council, and has been discussed (and revised on the basis of these discussions) with the department chairs of each of the three Schools of the College.

Deans Council recommends this policy for consideration by the College Senate.

Please let me know if you have questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

Timothy Flanagan

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Timothy J. Flanagan, PhD  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
SUNY College at Brockport  
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email: flanagan@brockport.edu

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# EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCESS AT SUNY BROCKPORT

DRAFT: 2-28-2006

Submitted by Faculty and Professional Staff Policies Committee, 4/10/06 with suggested revisions in italics and underlined.  
Also some other suggestions from Executive Committee are also incorporated as of 4/24/06.

## *Rationale*

- A. Peer review of research, scholarship and creative activity strengthens assessments of quality in academic personnel decisions.*
- B. Peer review is consistent with norms of scholarly review in all disciplines.*
- C. Peer assessments may also provide valuable information, insight and context to the APT Committee, Department Chair, Dean, and other campus decision-makers.*

## *Application*

1. Tenure track faculty hired—to-campus on/after August 1, 2007
2. Required for promotion (to Associate Professor; to Professor) and in tenure decision cases **provided that the departmental APT committee or the department chair or the candidate requests it. (amendment proposed at 5/8 Senate meeting by Georges Dicker))**
3. Names of reviewers (at least two each) from:
  - a. Candidate
  - b. Department APT Committee
4. Peer reviewers should be
  - a. At/above rank sought
  - b. No conflict of interest (e.g., mentor, co-author)
5. Departmental Chair in consultation with the School Dean selects/solicits at least two consultants (may use third if needed) from names recommended by Candidate and APT Committee. The candidate's should be given the name, background/qualifications of potential reviewers by departmental chairs prior to the reviewers being selected.
6. Deans Office provides reviewers with:
  - a. C.V.
  - b. Copies of selected, representative articles, books, electronic publications, etc.
  - c. Information re: teaching load during probationary period (number of course sections, enrollment, independent study, Master's thesis supervision, Honors thesis supervision, Directed Study, advisee load).
  - d. Departmental APT document.
7. Focus of review: scholarly and creative activity only (does not include teaching, service).
8. Criteria: contributions to discipline; standing in field, tenure/promotion status in relation to scholarly expectations at SUNY Brockport.
9. Disclosure: Article 31 of UUP Agreement.

PROPOSED AMMENDMENT TO  
#48 05-06 FP  
EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE  
TENURE AND PROMOTION PROCESS AT SUNY BROCKPORT  
10/24/06

Submitted by Chris Norment and Steve Ullman, October 24, 2006; proposed changes are in red.

*Rationale*

- D. Peer review of research, scholarship and creative activity strengthens assessments of quality in academic personnel decisions.*
- E. Peer review is consistent with norms of scholarly review in all disciplines.*
- F. Peer assessments may also provide valuable information, insight and context to the APT Committee, Department Chair, Dean, and other campus decision-makers.*

*Application*

10. Tenure track faculty hired—to-campus on/after August 1, 2007

11. Required for promotion to Professor only.

12. Names of potential reviewers (at least three) from the Department APT Committee.

13. Peer reviewers should have no conflict of interest (e.g., mentor, co-author).

14. Departmental Chair in consultation with the School Dean selects/solicits at least two consultants (may use third if needed) from names recommended by Candidate and APT Committee. The candidates should be given the name, background/qualifications of potential reviewers by departmental chairs prior to the reviewers being selected.

15. Deans Office provides reviewers with:

- a. C.V.
- b. Copies of selected, representative articles, books, electronic publications, etc.
- c. Information re: teaching load (number of course sections, enrollment, independent study, Master's thesis supervision, Honors thesis supervision, Directed Study, advisee load).
- d. Departmental APT document.

16. Focus of review: scholarly and creative activity, and contributions to discipline only. However, reviewers should consider teaching and service expectations at SUNY Brockport into account when evaluating scholarly and creative activity.

17. Disclosure: Article 31 of UUP Agreement.

**RE: PEER REVIEW PROPOSAL**

Provided by Provost in response to questions from Executive Committee 4/24/06

***1. Why is this policy being proposed at this time?***

To answer this question, I would point to the Rationale, included as part of the proposal, which has guided discussion of this proposal since Fall 2005. The rationale is based in the fundamental role that peer review plays in decision making in academia. In addition, discussion of peer review as a component of academic personnel decisions was also introduced as part of the Mission Review II discussion between SUNY system administration and all of the Comprehensive Colleges in Spring 2005. Several of our sister institutions within SUNY use some form of peer review in academic personnel decisions.

- At Geneseo, external review can be requested by any level of the review process (department, college, provost) and is most commonly used in promotion to Full professor.
- New Paltz uses ‘objective’ external reviews; two are required, but most departments use three reviewers. (By the way, the Provost of New Paltz was formerly in CUNY, where six reviewers are standard practice!)
- Oneonta requires three external reviews.
- Purchase requires three external letters for all promotion and tenure cases.
- Buffalo State is reviewing this matter, but currently requires that “the significance of the person’s accomplishment is attested to by peers and reputable figures in the field away from campus” in promotion to Full professor.

***2. Is this being done to bolster the APT documents of some departments?***

No, the review of criteria for academic personnel decisions embodied in departmental APT documents is unrelated to this proposal. Should the Senate recommend some version of the Peer Review proposal, the protocol for identifying, soliciting, securing, and incorporating peer reviews in departmental APT documents would have to be appended to existing APT documents.

***3. What percent rate would be applied to the results of the external review in promotion/tenure decisions?***

External peer reviews are evidence to be evaluated by colleagues in departments. I would strongly oppose any administratively-directed “weighting” of such evidence. I have great confidence in the decision making of our departmental APT committees, department chairs, and departmental faculty, so I am confident that departments would use this information wisely and fairly, in the context of the entire dossier being examined.



Subject	Re: External Review Proposal
From	<a href="mailto:jford@brockport.edu">jford@brockport.edu</a>
Date	Tuesday, October 17, 2006 11:32 am
To	<a href="mailto:senate@brockport.edu">senate@brockport.edu</a>
Cc	<a href="mailto:Alex.Alexandrov@brockport.edu">Alex Alexandrov &lt;alexand@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Alisia.Burnes-Chase@brockport.edu">Alisia Burnes-Chase &lt;achase@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Arthur.Graham@brockport.edu">Arthur Graham &lt;agraham@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Barb.Mitrano@brockport.edu">Barb Mitrano &lt;bmitrano@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Barbara.LeSavoy@brockport.edu">Barbara LeSavoy &lt;blesavoy@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Brian.Dickinson@brockport.edu">Brian Dickinson &lt;bdickins@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Christopher.Alonzo@brockport.edu">Christopher Alonzo &lt;calonzo@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Christopher.Norment@brockport.edu">Christopher Norment &lt;cnorment@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Clyde.Morgan@brockport.edu">Clyde Morgan &lt;cmorgan@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Colleen.Donaldson@brockport.edu">Colleen Donaldson &lt;cdonalds@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:David.Bloom@brockport.edu">David Bloom &lt;dbloom@brockport.edu&gt;</a> , <a href="mailto:Dawn.M.Jones@brockport.edu">"Dawn M. 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Attachments	<a href="#">Fox Excerpt.doc</a>

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Dear Senators

As requested at the last College Senate meeting (October 9), I have gathered together various arguments put forth by the members of the Faculty & Professional Staff Policies Committee regarding Proposal #48 05-06 FP External Review Policy. Additionally, I am

also attaching text from an email I sent to committee members regarding comments made by Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Michael Fox, to the Executive Committee.

The following comments were raised in opposition to the proposal:

- Rationale statements A and B are already incorporated into the APT process, and there is no justification of need for the incorporation of statement C. Question posed of whether anyone cited a problem with the current policy. If not, why are we considering a 'fix'.
- Application statement 2 provides for a department chair, an APT Committee Chair, or a candidate to request external review. Question: Who arbitrates if there is a dispute as to the necessity of an external review? There was a concern that there was nothing in the policy document to deal with such a potential conflict of opinion.
- In general, APT decisions at SUNY Brockport are heavily weighted towards demonstration of successful development as a teacher. The question was posed as to why research needs an external review when it is essentially a minority issue in APT decision processes, but evaluation of teaching is assessed internally?
- Question was raised about the definition or discussion of costs the Administration will incur by implementing this policy. The point was that even though the overall costs are likely to be modest, it appears to be an additional layer of bureaucracy, and it was argued that the procedure would likely waste time and money instead of improving the APT process.
- The process of external review and evaluation can already be implemented by Departments if they deem necessary. It was questioned as to whether the proposal represented a significant improvement on existing departmental APT processes.

In support of the proposal, the following comments were offered:

- Point was raised that there may not be enough Full Professors to adequately judge the work of Associate Professors seeking promotion.
- It was suggested that this process should also be opened to current staff, but only if the "reviewee requests to use this process." Furthermore, it was suggested that "the resistance to this process we saw within the senate was merely the fear of something new."
- It was argued (without further elaboration) that this provision, in appropriate cases, should make the process of gaining tenure more fair.
- It was argued (without further elaboration) that there should be mandatory external review of scholarship for all significant personnel decisions

Others were in favor of the idea of external review, but not the proposal:

- There are no real guidelines for what the reviewer is expected to do. It's entirely appropriate to ask the reviewer to evaluate our scholarship. Asking them to evaluate whether it meets Brockport's (or the department's) standards is trickier. And asking them to do it in the context of everything else we do (as implied in #6c) -- in essence, to handicap us -- seems like an unreasonable request, especially if reviewers are not at institutions similar to Brockport.
- We shouldn't create a two-track system, in which some faculty are externally reviewed and others are not. If reviews are done, fine. But they should be done for everyone. My understanding from the Senate meetings last spring is that some departments

already have an external review mechanism in place, so in effect we already may have a two-track system. Writing it into policy, however, strikes me as a mistake.

Best,

Julie M. Ford

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[Fox Excerpt.doc](#)

The following is an excerpt from email to Faculty & Professional Staff Policies Committee regarding Proposal #48 05-06 FP External Review Policy dealing with comments made by Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Michael Fox, to the Executive Committee.

*First, as has been mentioned by others, currently some departments do require an external peer review (although most do not). His point was that there is no prohibition on requesting an external review (this policy can be detailed in a department's APT document). Fox then asked the question of whether it was fair that some departments had this requirement while others did not.*

*Second point Fox raised had to do with the wording change we are currently charged with considering. Fox was very concerned that this addition could open up an opportunity for charges of inequality. That is, a department (or chair) could hypothetically request an external review for one candidate, but not another. One question I have is that if the suggested rewording was further amended to drop the clause "at the request of the department or chair," and what was left was the only "at the request of the individual," then what teeth does the document have? An individual can request an external review, but this doesn't mean a department will necessarily accord it any weight. And again, there is currently no prohibition against doing this now.*

*Thirdly, Fox wondered that given that the assumed purpose of proposing an external review was to assure quality, shouldn't the requirement (if there is one) only be for senior faculty, since movement from Associate to Full is (or award of DSI, should be), by definition, based on a level of work that has "achieved or is moving to national recognition?" That is, don't they need someone from outside the institution to evaluate the level of "national recognition?"*